

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 SS-20 NSC-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 295

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 10024

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN US UR

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: DIFFICULTIES WITH AEROFLOT -- SOVIETS

TAKE THE INITIATIVE

RE: A. MOSCOW 8530 B. MOSCOW 9298

1. HAVING RECEIVED NO RESPONSE TO REFTELS, EMBASSY HAS
DEFERRED FURTHER ACTION TO COUNTER AEROFLOT MALPRACTICES.

2. ON JUNE 25 MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (MCA) DEPUTY
FOREIGN RELATIONS CHIEF KHRABROV CALLED IN EMBOFF TO PRESENT
NON-PAPER, ROUGH TRANSLATION OF WHICH FOLLOWS:

"ACCORDING TO A REPORT FROM THE AEROFLOT REPRESENTATION
IN THE USA, IT HAS BEEN SUMMONED INTO A COURT OF THE EASTERN
REGION OF NEW YORK REGARDING AN INVESTIGATION OF THE AEROFLOT
REPRESENTATION'S COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY ON THE TERRITORY OF THE
USA.

"THIS FACT HAS BEEN WIDELY PUBLICIZED IN THE AMERICAN
PRESS, WHICH IN NO WAY FACILITATES THE NORMAL DEVELOPMENT
OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE USSR AND USA IN THE FIELD OF CIVIL
AVIATION.

"MCA VIEWS THIS AS ONE OF THE UNFRIENDLY ACTS
REGARDING AEROFLOT WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BECOME MORE
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FREQUENT.

"CONSIDERING THE UPCOMING VISIT TO THE USSR OF USA PRESIDENT R. NIXON AND THE FAVORABLE PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET-AMERICAN TIES IN THE FIELD OF AIR TRANSPORT, THE SOVIET SIDE IS REFRAINING FROM ADOPTING RETALIATORY MEASURES TOWARD THE PAN AMERICAN REPRESENTATION IN THE USSR IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT IT (MCA) POSSESSES EVIDENCE OF ITS (PAN AM'S) ILLIGAL COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY ON THE TERRITORY OF THE USSR, ASSUMING THAT THE AMERICAN SIDE, FOR ITS PART, WILL RENOUNCE IT PROPOSALS FOR DISCRIMINATORY ACTIONS TOWARD AEROFLOT."

3. IN RESPONSE TO EMOFF'S PROBING, KHRABROV DECLINED TO ELABORATE FURTHER BOTH WITH REGARD TO AEROFLOT"COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY" FOR WHICH IT WAS BROUGHT TO COURT IN NEW YORK AND MCA'S "EVIDENCE"OF PAN AM "ILLEGAL COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY" IN USSR.

4. LAST PARAGRAPH APPEARS TO BE OPERATIVE PORTION OF NON-PAPER, WITH SOVIETS TAKING INITIATIVE BY ATTACKING PAN AM FOR ITS ALLEGED ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN USSR. IN THIS WAY SOVIETS PRESUMABLY HOPE TO DEFLECT ATTENTION AWAY FROM CONTINUING, SERIOUS DEVIATIONS BY AEROFLOT FROM BOTH US-USSR BILATERAL AND PAN AM-AEROFLOT AGREEMENT.

5. IN ADDITION TO VARIOUS PROBLEMS WITH AEROFLOT CITED IN REFTEL A, EMBASSY HAS NOW BEEN INFORMED BY MOSCOW PAN AM REP THAT AEROFLOT CARGO DIVISION AT SHEREMET'YEVO AIRPORT FREQUENTLY REFUSES TO ACCEPT CARGO DESTINED FOR US ON PAN AM FLIGHTS IF SHIPPER DESIRES TO EFFECT PAYMENT IN RUBLES. THIS PRACTICE, CLEARLY VIOLATING PAN AM-AEROFLOT AGREEMENT, HAS BEEN PROTESTED BY LOCAL PAN AM REPS WITHOUT RESULT.

6. EMBASSY BELIEVES MCA NON-PAPER SHOULD NOT GO UNCHALLENGED, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF AEROFLOT PRACTICES IT APPARENTLY DESIGNED TO COVERUP. ACCORDINGLY, UNLESS DEPARTMENT PERCEIVES

SERIOUS OBJECTION, EMBASSY PROPOSES TO FOLLOW LINE OF ACTION ESPOUSED IN PARA. 5 REFTEL A IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S DEPARTURE FROM USSR.

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